

# EASTER GOWNS FOR MATRONS.

Styles That Will Rule in Paris, Where It Is the Duty of Every Woman to Be Young.

## X-RAY GOODS BY FAR THE MOST POPULAR.

Easter Dresses That Will Be Worn by the Countess of Essex and Lady Blackwood.

THEY ARE OF NOT VERY EXTRAVAGANT DESIGNS.

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PARIS, March 28.—In Paris one goes even further than the old proverb that every woman has a right to look as young as she can.

It is her duty to look young with the kindly willing help, of course, of her modest and discreet. Everybody expects it of her, and Paris fashion comes in the house with a thousand and one pretty, fluffy materials with which to soften faces that are no longer young.

In France a woman never attains to the height of her possibilities until she is married and well along in her thirties. Her society is sought more than at any other period of her life. And as every "jeune fille" must needs have a champion every and all occasions the matron here is very much in evidence at all the social functions.

A TOUCH OF AGE.  
Growing old gradually in France doesn't mean at all that she must give up bright colors and pay little attention to prevailing styles and adopt black for all gowns. It rather means that one must keep pace with Father Time, and even anticipate his ravages.

When he begins to stamp the brow with wrinkles then more attention must be paid to arranging the hair in soft waves around the face. High hair does come of fashion or mousseline de soie can be made to hide completely a shining neck, and modistes always insist that a bow of bright red in a bonnet relieves very much a yellow face in an old skin.

When I made my journey to the shops this week in search of gowns for matrons, I found myself overwhelmed by the number and variety shown me. It must be said that most of the dresses for matrons are of thin material, no being softer and more graceful. In half a hundred Easter gowns for young married women to wear to church and for a promenade afterwards, at least thirty of the number were of "X-ray" lace-in-tulle and showing the lining underneath.

Let me describe a group of young matrons, among whom were Lady Terence Blackwood and the Countess of Essex, trying on gowns for Easter. In Paris they have such a delightful way of showing dresses. You walk through the prettiest rooms, up the clearest stairs and hear all the gossip while "trying on" the most beautiful French creations.

AN EASTER CREATION.  
Had there been no names mentioned I should have asserted that not one of these matrons was on the sunny side of thirty-five—neither forty, most of them—yet their gowns gave them the delicate figures of young girls.

The Easter gown of the Countess of Essex was of mousseline, trimmed over green tulle. A little green satin stripe ran through the folds. The waist had a vest and lapels of pale green satin-faced cloth, and the hat repeated the pale green shade and was set off by black plumes.

Another dress, a black and white striped

line de sole that extended from the collar to the waist band. The sleeves of black satin were tight fitting, with very little fullness at the top. The collar was a high stock collar of black velvet mounted by a frill of white mousseline de soie.

An exceedingly chic gown suitable for a young matron's "at home" toilette is built of heliotrope bengaline in rather a light shade of heliotrope. The skirt was a full godet, fitted close at the hips, with the fulness gathered in two rows at the back. Over the two seams of the front there was a trimming of jet that extended six inches below the waist band.

BOLERO EFFECTS.  
The bolero fastened at the side. It was made of the bengaline and was slashed on each side of the front and the sides were cut to give the effect of a short bolero over a blouse of black mousseline de soie. There was a sort of draped bertha of black mousseline de soie that commenced at each shoulder seam with a butterfly bow and extended across the front of the bolero.

The back of the bolero was fashioned to give the effect of a short straight bolero over a black mousseline de soie blouse. Edging the jacket and the pointed front there was a narrow jet passementerie. The bolero was also of jet. The sleeves of the heliotrope bengaline were tight-fitting with the fulness at the top draped high. Following the outside seam of the sleeves were two narrow strips of the jet passementerie. The collar was a high draped collar of deep heliotrope velvet.

LACE WAISTS.  
Two or three of the latest evening dresses I saw, fashioned expressly for elderly matrons, were made of black lace over satin. I am told that lace gowns for evening are becoming quite the rage. And some of the beautiful new lace gowns I saw, made of point d'esprit over transparentes of satin, were lovely enough to convince one of their coming popularity.

Such pretty evening waists in subdued shades of heliotrope or light gray, lighted by touches of pale rose, are on hand for the shops. They are fashioned expressly for matrons and they look so wonderfully dressy with a skirt of black satin more.

Judging from the demand for gowns for matrons, the young girls are all going to Easter Day, leaving the "gowns" for the married women.

NINA GOODWIN.

A Man in the Case.

Some one who has made a careful study of the matter has decided that women are much less inclined to commit theft than are men.

In Europe especially is this made evident, for women are there given positions as cashiers and custodians of wealth more than they are here. The situation, however, in which women's honesty is put to the greatest test is as domestics. The card-carrying with which change articles for women is entrusted to their care is everywhere apparent and the universal habit of mistresses leaving their jewelry and dainty articles of personal adornment scattered over the whole house in the most careless manner is offering a terrible temptation to the maid.

Dainty laces and bits of gold and jewels appeal to the feminine heart as much as anything else in the world, and it is a fine proof of a woman's sense of honor that she so rarely succumbs to the temptation. In fact, in those instances where maids have been known to appropriate their mistresses' possessions it has generally been found that some man outside the house has urged her to make the desperate attempt.

THE POET SQUAD.

Captain Jack Crawford Objects to Premature Demise.

For some time past paragraphs have been going the rounds of the newspapers announcing the death of Capt. Jack Crawford, the "Poet Squad," sometimes accompanied with glowing obituaries of the long-haired writer of verse from the wild and woolly west. Now, while some of these have made interesting reading, Capt. Jack apparently has grown tired of

reading about his own good qualities. To put a stop to this sort of thing, for Capt. Jack is still very much alive, he recently wrote a characteristic letter to the editor of The Evening Star, in the course of which he says:

"Please correct the story of my death recently published in The Star. My wife is deluged with congratulatory letters and telegrams of condolence. I certainly am not responsible for these reports, and it is getting monotonous reading such handsome, yet interesting obituaries, though it is pleasant to know before one

shuffles off, &c., that such nice things will be said of him when gone.

"But I'd rather have a little taffy now

Than a million-dollar epitaphy then, And a little laurel wreath at my brow Would make the golden crown rest easy, when?"

"Why, when poets get together over there, When Bret Harte and Joaquin climb the golden stair,

## UNIQUE EASTER WEDDING.

A Brooklyn Girl Has Turned a Fire Escape Into an Alcove With

STEPS AND EASTER BELLS OVERHEAD.

Some of the Odd Wedding Ceremonies Which Will Take Place During Easter Week—Churchyard and Monument.

(Copyright, 1897, for The Times.)

Miss Daisy Marguerite Post, of Brooklyn, N. Y., is to be married upon the fire-escape of her mother's flat the Tuesday following Easter, weather permitting and nothing happening to spoil the plans.

The apartment in which Miss Post lives is like all flats—a string of rooms like a bowling alley—or, as W. D. Howells describes it, "a series of closets called a flat."

That fire-escape had been in her eye all winter when planning the nuptials, but it was only recently that she thought how very useful it would be if made into an alcove room—so very like the chapel of a church!

On Easter Monday the carpenters will enter the room in the flat and run a lattice or iron work and slats around the fire-escape. Later the decorators will come and hang tapestries, and then will come the florists with their potted plants and vases. When completed the fire-escape will be a brilliant and beautiful tower, over which the wedding bell will swing.

The bride and bridegroom will enter the room from the further corner to the stairs of "Lohengrin," cross the room and mount a small flight of steps to the fire-escape. The steps are temporary affairs leading from the room to the window-sill. The glass will be taken out of the window so that it will be like walking up the steps through a broad doorway.

On top of the fire-escape the clergyman will stand in his vestments. He has preceded the bride and bridegroom by a minute. Then the closest relatives of both parties will walk up the steps and out upon the escape, and the others will stand down in the room below looking up into the little bowered room.

The idea is not entirely new, that of being married upon a date. Mrs. Cleve, had wanted to be married in that way upon the stairs of the White House, where the company in the room could see her plainly. But she descended to the Blue Room.

Amelia Rives had her first marriage ceremony performed upon a date under a wedding bell, and the Countess Casavola stood upon a raised platform half a step higher than the room. And of course in every church wedding there is the pulpit or altar for the high contracting parties.

But this is the first time where the thing has been conducted upon an original plan.

After the ceremony the couple will stand upon their lofty platform long enough to receive the congratulations of their friends, and then come down into the dining-room for the wedding supper. The wedding will take place at night, and the only thing visible from the outside of the house will be an inclosed fire-escape.

After the ceremony is over and the couple have come down from their perch upon the fire-escape a porter will be drawn at the window and a carpenter

they had begged him in tears to go there to perform the ceremony.

In a well-peopled city it is not easy to select odd marrying spots. But a Brooklyn girl, no relation to the fire-escape maiden, insists upon being wedded in Greenwood Cemetery at midnight, while near by a rabbit will be liberated and "shooed" across her path between herself and the clergyman. This is to counteract the unlucky day of her birth, the 13th of October. Another girl is going down to Bedloe's Island in a small boat to be married under the torch of liberty, and on Easter Sunday a certain Miss Anna Leach will ride out to Grant's tomb on the Boulevard and be married a few feet from the spot where Li Hung Chang stood, returning on a quadruple wheel with the clergyman, her father and the bridegroom.

The fire-escape young woman belongs to a family of considerable means, and she is going to do the Easter wedding feast in a magnificent way, in order to have something novel at her wedding, and because she thinks it is a very good scheme to show a handsome white satin wedding dress to an audience.

Spare the Birds.

Editor of The Times:  
Sir,—I have often wished it were possible to persuade our country women to abandon the practice of wearing birds and feathers in their hats, but felt powerless to do anything in that direction. Now, however, the Rev. O. P. Gifford has come to the rescue, and has said all one could desire on that subject. If, after reading his appeal, women continue the fashion, the responsibility rests with them, of encouraging a cruel and wicked traffic, of causing the death of a creature that is so useful to the human race, and of making themselves the accomplices of a crime.

I sometimes wonder if when our grandmothers and great-grandmothers were young, they did not look as prettily as modern belles with dead birds and dead birds' feathers perched on top of the head. It is a pity our "King's Daughters" and "Christian Endeavorers" do not draw a line as to birds.

LOUISA JAY BENES.

Washington, D. C., March 23, 1897.  
Extract from a sermon delivered in Buffalo before the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals:

Moses, the friend of God, recognizes

the rights of birds and beasts in his laws.

"If a bird's nest chance to be before thee in the way in any tree, or on the ground, whether they be young ones or eggs, and the mother sitting upon them, thou shalt not take the mother with the young or with the eggs." Let us turn this law like a flashlight on modern millinery.

Yonder, on that "love of a hat," as an "allegory," a plume of white, as delicate as the auriferous of the Frost King when he registers his coming on the window-pane. This white plume was torn from the back of the "white heron." It was natural grace, it is artificial now, it is nature's hint of a new home and multiplied lives; it is new fashion's brand of shame on thoughtless women. The supply is gathered, when the breeding season is well advanced, the young are fully fed, but not able to fly; the mother seeks food for her young, and returning is shot by the waiting hunter, the tuft torn from its place, the body left to rot, and the motherless young to starve. One hunter kills an hundred in a day, forty to sixty hunters are out in the season; the air is tremulous with shrieks of suffering, heavy with the odor of decaying flesh, and all that vanity may be fed and pride nurtured.

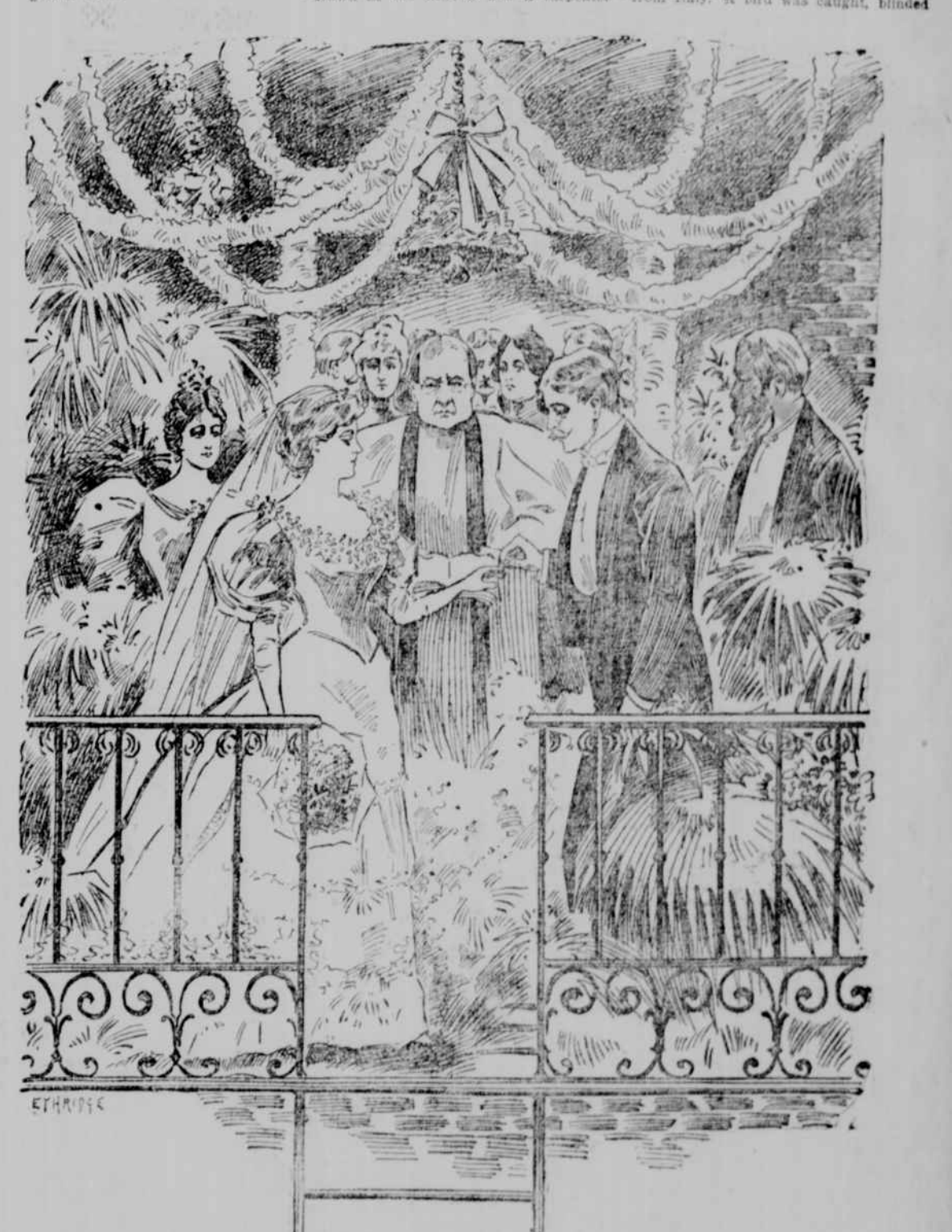
The white heron is almost exterminated in South Florida. Milliners' agents seek new birds.

Yonder is a stuffed body that came from Italy. A bird was caught, blinded



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"THEIR COSTUMES GAVE THOSE YOUNG MATRONS THE DELICATE GRACE OF YOUNG GIRLS."



With Shakespeare at the helm In the poet's special realm. What a lot of jolly fellows will be there!" —Washington Star.

The consumption of soap in India only reaches the modest amount of one ounce per head annually.

guns in a recent trial at Shoeburyness completely penetrated an eighteen-inch steel faced compound armor plate backed by a six-inch wrought iron plate, by eight feet of solid oak and three inches of iron, and was found imbedded in a clay bank thirty-five yards behind the target.

Spain, according to the War Office statistics, has sent, up to the end of 1896, 138,957 men and forty generals to Cuba. The deaths in the field and from yellow fever and other diseases were four generals and 22,721 men and officers. No account is given of the men sent home invalided, but at least 22,000 have returned, many of whom have since died.

will go outside and remove the decorations, so as not to interfere with the building laws concerning the obstruction of a fire-escape.

It was intended to serve the supper for the bridal table out there, but it is not allowable to obstruct a fire-escape for more than a few minutes, as fires are no respecters of feelings or occasions.

Quaker marriages are always occurring at different places. A certain German town clergyman of wealth was married upon Mount Ararat, his bride and he going half way around the world to be married on the Mount. And a few years ago a couple climbed to the top of Washington Monument with a licensed clergyman and were married there.

A young woman who was very fond of the theatre was married in a certain celebrated museum in New York a few weeks ago; and Dr. Dewitt Talmage tells many a good story about strange times and places selected by prospective brides for the wedding ceremony, which

with a hot iron, enaged, put in a tree, the branches of the tree aimed, the pitiful cry of the blind bird called sympathizing friends; they were caught by the bird's claws, captured by hunters, raised of life, and the skin stuffed for millinery.

Italy sits well-nigh songless to-day that vainly may parade our streets, adorned with stuffed birds and gentle-hearted women swell the funeral procession, each one bearing a bird's corpse.

The most valuable collection of stamps in Russia belongs to a Mr. Breitman, of St. Petersburg. It is arranged in over 100 volumes, and is valued at 1,500,000 rubles.

In Vienna the height of a house must not exceed eighty-two feet; the floor of the last story must not be more than 2.6 feet above the level of the street. When the ground slopes this measure must be taken from the highest point. The house must not have more than five stories, including the cellar and attic. A projectile from the new English wire